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[JULY, 1906.]

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HE Nonconformist Choir Union Festival on the 16th ult. was a distinct success. "Progress" was the feature of every item of the day's programme. More choirs entered the competitions,

and the singing was, for the most part, very satisfactory—in fact, the winning choir in one contest got full marks, which means perfection. The choir at the afternoon concert was the largest for many years; with the exception of small vacant space in one corner, the vast Handel orchestra was full. The singing, too, was better than usual; there was more attention to the conductor's beat; more expression and more lightness and brightness generally, though there is still room for improvement. The audience, moreover, was larger than on many previous occasions. The fact that a Yorkshire choir undertook the evening concert, and choirs from Bradford, Rushden, Biggleswade, Bilston, Earl's Barton, and Barnsley entered the competitions, shows that the provincial choirs are again taking up the Union work, in spite of the increased railway fares. The action of the railway companies has seriously affected all such Festivals for some years past, but apparently the N.C.U. has turned the corner, and things are looking bright and rosy.

♦♦♦♦

An unfortunate error, which would be obvious to our readers, crept into "The Pilgrim Song," on page 96, in our last issue. The B flat to the first syllable of the word "prepare" should be C natural.

♦♦♦♦

In C.S.M.I. Bostock (of the School of Musketry), the Hythe Nonconformist Choir Union has a very efficient conductor, though he is a

soldier. He is a Staffordshire man, and gained his experience in one of the well-known prize choirs in the Hanley district. Besides his military and choral work, he is a Sunday-school teacher and superintendent of a Band of Hope.

♦♦♦♦

A writer in the *World* refers once again to Wedding Music, and wonders if brides, or those who select the music for these occasions, are wholly devoid of humour, as the hymns and anthems frequently sung are so far from being appropriate. For example, it does not seem precisely cheering for the friends and relations of a newly-wedded couple to lustily implore them to "Fight the Good Fight"; and surely it is distinctly discouraging to start a bride with "Oh, for the wings of a dove, that I might flee away and be for ever at rest." These are but samples of the inappropriate music lately heard at fashionable weddings.

♦♦♦♦

In spite of Mr. Carnegie's frequent gifts towards organs, some of the Scotch folks are still very strongly opposed to the introduction of instrumental music into churches. At the recent Free Church Assembly the Rev. Murdo Macqueen expressed the official view when he said he was amazed at the audacity of any congregation thinking that they could, in face of the legislation of last Assembly, carry on instrumental music and use uninspired hymns in the worship of God. When the Free High Church was handed over to the Free Church, to which it properly belonged, that abominable thing (Mr. Macqueen here turned to the organ and vigorously shook his clenched fist at it)—that abominable thing, he repeated, would be removed from the church and ground to powder, or buried in the German Ocean.

We have received the annual report and statement of accounts of the Workington Wesleyan Choir. It is interesting reading, and extends to fourteen pages. We note that Choir members pay an annual subscription of 8s. 6d., to be paid weekly. On the other hand we see that last year 6s. per member was voted out of the funds towards the annual picnic. Honorary members are admitted on payment of 5s. each, or an equivalent in music. The attendance of every choir member at the Sunday services and practice is given, and we observe that the conductor has been present on every occasion; the organist has only been absent once; the next best is a bass, who has put in 121 out of a possible 132 attendances. The receipts of the choir from February, 1892, to April, 1906, amounted to £428, and of that sum

£132 has been spent in picnics, £41 for music, £30 donation to trustees, £29 in decoration of the organ. The booklet gives a list of 117 anthems, etc., belonging to the choir. The selection has been admirably made, and speaks much for the capability of the choir. Clearly there is much vigorous life in this Wesleyan choir.

♦♦♦♦

Rarely have we heard of a more appropriate anthem than that which was sung in Christ Church, Folkestone, on a recent Sunday evening, when a highly esteemed curate preached his farewell sermon. He and another curate sang with excellent feeling and taste, "Now we are ambassadors," and the choir followed with the chorus, "How lovely are the messengers."

Passing Notes.

A LEADER-WRITER in a provincial paper wants to know why we shouldn't have women piano-tuners. I really see no reason why we shouldn't. There are lady blacksmiths, lady stationmasters, lady ploughmen, lady sea-captains, lady goodness knows what all in the way of occupations once recognised as distinctively and exclusively male. I believe there are even ladies who play the bagpipe! Piano-tuning would seem to be just the thing for musically-inclined persons of the petticoat race to whom nature has denied fine voices, or the gift of teaching, or the art of handling an instrument in the usual professional sense. Tuning a piano is not a fatiguing business; indeed, I should call it a light occupation, and therefore admirably suited for the weaker sex, so-called. The only objection I can see is that which applies to a good many of the newer occupations for women. A male friend of mine says he could never have a lady doctor attend him because she might be pretty and have to put her ear to his chest or "sound" his heart. The near presence of a pretty female *does* increase the pulse sometimes, and I can easily see the risks of a diagnosis made under such mildly exciting conditions. The occupation of the piano-tuner involves no question of life and death (unless, of course, to the piano); and no doubt, other things being equal, a female would be preferred to a male tuner—if she were not pretty and did not excite in the young men of the household too profound an interest in piano-tuning. On the whole, I think I will stick by my male tuner. I am human, after all, and there is no saying what might happen if a fascinating young thing came into the house with a tuning key.

An interesting announcement is made by the Cambridge University Press. We are to have a volume from the pen of Mr. Sedley Taylor, dealing with the difficult subject of "Handel's Indebtedness to the Works of other Composers." Mr. Sedley Taylor, I read, will "seek to place before

musical readers, in an easily appreciable form, all the evidence necessary for forming an independent judgment on this interesting problem in the history of music." The author, I further learn, maintains that, wonderful as were the audacity and extent of Handel's appropriations, his power of infusing into what he borrowed an incomparably higher spirit than had before dwelt in it was more astonishing still. Of course we all admit *that*. But what has always troubled me is the moral question raised by these daring appropriations of the "divine Saxon." If a living composer were to be convicted of "borrowing" as Handel borrowed we should promptly denounce him as a thief and a robber, and the musical "select" would henceforward give him the cold shoulder. But Handel was a religious man, and he must have taken a different view of the borrowing business from what we are bound to take now. He "swore like a trooper" when enraged, and yet he said his prayers regularly and died like a Christian at the last. And just as he saw no sin in swearing, so, I charitably conclude, he saw no sin in "conveying" whatever he wanted from the works of other composers. Still, I "hae my doots," as the Scots say.

Speaking of the Scots, I see that the Presbyterian churches, at their annual May meetings, have been considering once more the question of making an anthology of the metrical psalms. I have pleaded for such an anthology for years. How many, out of all the one hundred and forty-five metrical psalms, are in actual use in the churches? I cannot speak for the English Presbyterian churches, but I know that in Scotland at least two-thirds of the Psalter are never drawn upon at all. The changes are simply rung upon a few of the traditional favourites, such as "I to the hills will lift mine eyes," "The Lord's my Shepherd," "All people that on earth do dwell," "God is our refuge and our strength," etc. Very well; my plan would be, either to make an anthology of these favourites, or simply incorporate them with the Church's



hymnal. At the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, there was a great outcry about the Psalms and Paraphrases losing their hold in the service of praise throughout the Church. There is no doubt whatever that they are losing their hold, though some of the parsons energetically denied the patent fact.

There is no getting over the fact that choirs don't care for the metrical psalms. Such, at any rate, is my experience. I never had a choir that took more than a perfunctory interest in these doggerel rhymes. In Scotland the psalms for the coming Sunday service are, as a rule, totally ignored at the choir practice, except, of course, in the country districts, where, in some cases, no hymns are sung. Consequently, as the choice of the praise material is often left in the hands of the organist, the "Hymnary" gets the preference, and the Psalter is all but ignored. I boldly confess it in my own practice. For a good many years now I have been allowed to "choose everything" except the hymn after the sermon, and I never have more than one metrical psalm at a service. The whole matter lies, of course, in a nutshell. Nobody would use the metrical psalms to-day unless it were for what Sir Walter Scott called their "hallowed associations." It were a poor world without sentiment, I admit; and even I, who dare not defend these doggerel rhymes, am sometimes moved by "Q God of Bethel," because it was my mother's swan song,

so to speak. Tut! tut! the lump is in my throat. It is time to think of the annual holiday.

I wonder if it will be Antwerp again? Or Rotterdam? Somehow I love the old places, though I do not particularly love the old metrical psalms. Some of my brother organists go to a new place every year. I often go to the old place. In Rotterdam I have heard the *slowest* church singing of anything in my experience. The Dutch, you see, are a leisurely people. I can never get over the fun of seeing the railway porters trying to make haste with their wooden shoes. How should they sing but slowly, what time the Sunday comes round! At Antwerp it is somewhat different. I usually go to the Cathedral there, partly because I like going, and partly because Thackeray said so much about the chimes in one of his "Roundabout Papers." The service appeals to me as novel because it is in a foreign tongue. But, musically, I still vote for "old England." It is not easy to beat us in the matter of church music. Last autumn I came home from hearing a good many Continental musical services to settle for a fortnight at Ilkley, in Yorkshire. It may have been sentiment again; but, upon my word, it moved me more to hear "Wareham" outside (outside, mind you!) a Congregational Church in Ilkley than it moved me to listen, inside, to the finest music that Cologne Cathedral could produce. Can you account for it? Of course you can.

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N response to our request for suggestion as to anthems which are "tolerably easy, effective when performed, and suitable for a very moderate choir," we have received replies from some of our readers

whom we know to be men of much experience, and whose opinion therefore is worthy of consideration. The following are suggested anthems:—

"O Praise God in His Holiness" .. T. Tallis Trimmell
 "I was Glad" .. Elvey
 "O how Amiable are Thy Dwellings" .. Eaton Fanning
 "The Lord is my Light" .. Dr. Hiles
 "How Lovely are Thy Habitations" .. C. K. Salaman
 "Blessed are They that Dwell in Thy House" .. Tours
 "Praise the Lord of my Soul" .. Dr. G. B. Arnold
 "Like as a Father" .. J. L. Hatton
 "Send out Thy Light" .. C. Gounod
 "The Radiant Morn" .. Woodward
 "The Lord Shall be Thy Confidence" .. Dr. Roberts
 "Praise the Lord" .. Elvey
 "Christ is Risen" .. J. Varley Roberts
 "Sing to Heaven" .. H. Davan Wetton
 "I will Sing of the Mercies of the Lord" .. C. Darnton
 "Praise the Lord, O my Soul" .. Roland Smart
 "While the Earth Remaineth" .. J. H. Maunier
 "Hearken unto Me, My People" .. A. Sullivan
 "Sing unto the Lord" .. E. A. Sydenham
 "The Lord is Loving" .. G. M. Garrett
 "Thou Wilt Keep Him in Perfect Peace" .. C. L. Williams
 "Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem" .. E. V. Hall
 "Great is the Lord" .. Bruce Steane
 "I will Magnify Thee, O God, my King" .. J. B. Calkin
 "I will Give Thanks unto Thee" .. J. Barnby

"A Day in Thy Courts" .. G. A. Macfarren
 "O That I Knew" .. W. S. Bennett
 "My Soul Truly Waiteth" .. W. Rea
 "The Glory of the Lord" .. Goss
 "The Lord is my Shepherd" .. G. A. Macfarren
 "O Lord, our Governor" .. H. Gadsby
 "Blessing, Glory, Wisdom, and Thanks" .. B. Tours
 "I am Alpha and Omega" .. Stainer
 "Glory to Thee, my God, this Night" .. Gounod
 "Rock of Ages" .. Gounod
 "O Divine Redeemer" .. Gounod
 "Come, all Ye Weary" .. Gounod
 "Sun of my Soul" .. E. Turner
 "O Worship the King" .. J. H. Maunier
 (Introducing Tune, Hanover.)
 "It is a Thing Most Wonderful" .. J. H. Maunier
 "Abide With Me" .. Oliver King
 "Lo, God, our God, has Come" .. Baltison Haynes
 "O Zion, That Bringest" .. Stainer
 "Sweet is Thy Mercy" .. Barnby
 "O Gladsome Light" (Golden Legend) .. Sullivan
 "There is a Green Hill Far Away" .. Gounod
 "The King of Love my Shepherd is" .. Arnott
 "O for a Closer Walk" .. Foster
 "In Humble Faith" .. Garrett
 "O Saviour of the World" .. Goss
 "They Have Taken Away my Lord" .. Stainer
 "The King of Love my Shepherd is" .. Gounod
 "Far From my Heavenly Home" .. Vincent
 "The Christian's Battle Song" .. Jude

The majority of the above are published by Novello, and some by Boosey, Vincent, Ambrose Abbott, Reid Bros., and the MUSICAL JOURNAL Office. A further list will appear shortly.

Music at the Baptist Church, Rugby.

BEAUTIFUL for situation" is a good description of the Rugby Baptists' spiritual home, standing, as it does, fronted by a "village green" at the entrance to the town. Its exterior is well matched by the comfort attained in the interior fittings and arrangements. The church is new, and considerable care has been exercised by architect and builder to produce an ideal sanctuary, and they have succeeded. Every seat commands a full view of the preacher—the pews being arranged horse-shoe fashion—and the solid back to the oak pew contributes to the hearer's comfort.

But, while gratified to find such a beautiful and well-appointed building, it was the reputation of the fine choral work associated with the church that furnished the reason for our visit, and the pleasure was further enhanced during the progress of the service. In some particulars the occasion was not a fortunate one, as a gentle summer rain commenced to fall just before distant members were due to leave home, and even choir members were not proof against temptation, so that the attendance in choir and congregation was, we were assured, below the usual average. It struck the visitor, too, that the week-old announcement of the subject of the sermon, "The Importance of doing nothing," was not calculated to lead to much sacrifice in the matter of attendance under the climatic conditions which obtained. It was easy to stay at home and carry out the lesson of the sermon's motto, although to those who heard it, there was, of course, quite another line of thought—indeed, it was a very excellent deliverance of a highly spiritual character on the importance of living a life of absolute dependence on the guidance of God and a full surrender to the leadings of the Holy Spirit.

The choir seats are arranged behind the pulpit, with the organ in the rear, and a fine lead is thus given to the congregation, who also do some good work in united praise. The choice of the opening hymn, was, under the

circumstances, a happy one: "How pleased and blest was I" to "Ascalon" was a good start, and being rendered by folks who had suffered a slight discomfort in reaching the sanctuary, it went well. The hymns were from "Psalms and Hymns," while the tunes were from "The Treasury," no move being contemplated towards adopting the new Baptist Hymnal. The next hymn, "God is in His holy temple" ("St. Werburgh"), was good in its appropriateness and also in its execution—a fine worship hymn.

The pastor, Rev. J. H. Lees, gave a short address to the "boys and girls"—good in matter, but not winning in manner. The oft-repeated "boys and girls" seemed to place the young folks at arms' length, at least so it appeared to the writer, who, having a wide acquaintance with young people, thought that "my young friends" would have attracted more attention, and the young listeners would have absorbed more of the excellent instruction contained in the address.

A good selection was "My God, my Father, while I stray" (sung to F. C. Maker's "In Memoriam"), but Newton's "When any turn from Zion's way" was hardly so happy—the line "To save a wretch like me" sounding strangely inappropriate in the mouths of the



MR. ALFRED E. HOLDOM.

younger choir members, who, all the same, did their duty. The last hymn was "Father, I know that all my life," and it formed a fitting close to an interesting and helpful service.

It was afterwards found that the enforced and unexpected absence of Mr. A. E. Holdom, the choirmaster, through illness in his family, caused the omission of the usual anthem, which is almost invariably taken at both morning and evening services. A few minutes spent under his own roof gave an opportunity of becoming acquainted with an earnest and capable worker, and of gleanings some few particulars as to his work. Mr. Holdom has been in charge of the choir for a considerable period, but for the last three years the choir has been upon a more satisfactory basis, with active support from the pastor, and with a good working committee, so that to-day it is at its

best. It has a good reputation throughout the surrounding district, and at the Choral Competition held last year at the Crystal Palace, in connection with the Nonconformist Choir Union, the choir only missed the award by two marks. Indeed, the preparation for this contest was, in Mr. Holdom's judgment, the means of making the choir what it is, and the progress made has exceeded all the expectations which he indulged in when entering for the contest. Unfortunately, much heavy work in connection with the opening of the new church has prevented an entry this year, but it is firmly hoped that another season will see them in the lists with a good hope of success. In connection with the competition, Mr. Holdom received a request from Mr. Basil Johnson, B.A., the music master at the famous Rugby School, that he might hear the choir before they went to the Palace, and he afterwards wrote to Mr. Holdom in warm terms of appreciation of the careful drilling the choir

had received, and the excellent attention which they paid to the various "points," and their enthusiasm in their work. Needless to say that such commendation and interest were highly valued by the choir and its trainer.

The services of the organist, Mr. Stamp, also received ample recognition. The organ is not of the best, but the best is made of it, and Mr. Stamp has a vigorous liking for the work, his previous experiences in other musical centres giving him some excellent standards to which he reaches onward and upward. He has only been in office a few months, but he has already proved to be a genial and enthusiastic co-worker with Mr. Holdom, who speaks highly of his ability and interest in the choir's work.

Under such happy circumstances the choir should continue to prosper, and to all appearances there is a season of useful work in front which we trust will receive adequate reward in an increased appreciation far and near.

London Sunday School Choir.



NOT without reminders that the past is slipping farther and farther away, the thirty-fourth annual festival was held on June 20th at the Crystal Palace. For the first time it was found necessary to kindly enforce the absence of the veteran manager and co-founder, Mr. Jonathan Barnard, who, fortunately recovered to a great extent from recent severe illness, yet found it unwise to leave his home to encounter heavy fatigue in the various operations of the long day's crowded activities. Memories of former friends and helpers in the early days of the choir's history would be abundant, and the choral contest for the "Founders' Shield"—one of the chief attractions of the day—bearing as it does portraits of the late Mr. Luther Hinton, as well as Mr. Barnard's, is a token of the passing days too patent for a failing man. One of the happiest features of the organisation is, however, the presence as officers of the whole of the male members of the families of the co-founders, and somewhere in the junior choir were to be found three or four of the third generation bearing their small part in the happy traditions. Most fortunately the signs of the past did not overshadow the prosperity of the present, for the vigorous youthfulness of the choir has never been more apparent than on the present occasion. The attendance was as large, the choirs as full, the contest as keen, and the quality of the singing as high as at any former festival, and the interest evinced is a splendid testimony to the usefulness of the organisation.

To open the day's proceedings, the immense spaces of the Handel orchestra were fully occupied by five thousand junior singers from the Sunday-schools, who satisfactorily performed a varied programme of music suited to their capabilities, under the conductorship of Mr. J. Wellard Mathews, with Mr. P. H. Kessell at the great organ. The concert, listened to throughout by an immense crowd of interested visitors, opened with Giebel's popular setting of "Stand up for Jesus." Sulli-

van's "Hushed was the evening hymn" next followed—a little lacking in expression and attention to *piano* passages. A hymn, "God is good," was ably rendered, and was re-demanded. To essay "O rest in the Lord" by such a combination was somewhat risky, but the piece was well sung, although more attention to the beat would have improved its rendering. Challinor's "Sweetly sing the children" had an awkward syncopation, which, constantly recurring, was never altogether conquered, and which somewhat spoiled the piece, which is a pretty two-part composition. "They that trust in the Lord" (Donald) is broad and free, and was well sung. The piece introduces "St. Ann," in which the audience joined.

In the interval between the parts some marvellously pretty effects were obtained by coloured book-covers, manipulated at the guidance of the conductor in various ways, producing some unlooked-for effects, surprising in their execution and heartily enjoyed by the youthful performers. Some hand and handkerchief-drill followed with like charm.

The second part consisted of action songs, etc., including "Merrily sped the mill-wheel," with whistling refrain; Mendelssohn's "Morning Prayer," which would have been improved by more rehearsal; "A Sailor's Life is Bold and Free," in which the boys lustily upheld their solo part; "The Minstrel Boy"; and Ward's "Work's the Thing," introduced by handclaps with good effect, and concluding by handkerchiefs waving and general cheering. This might well have been for relief at the concert's ending, for the day was very hot and the children were evidently affected thereby. The singing lacked the "fire" which is obtained in a cooler atmosphere, and their attention was a little slack in consequence of the prevailing discomfort. The full reward for the work involved in preparing the programme will doubtless be reaped in the improved singing of the various schools which participated.

The choral competition for the "Founders'

Shield" was largely patronised in the afternoon. Four choirs entered—Kensington (Mr. Geo. Sexton), Eastern Division (Mr. Geo. Merritt), Willesden (Mr. J. S. Waddell), and Camberwell (Mr. J. F. Parsons). Mr. Leonard C. Venables was judge, and the test-piece was Leslie's "How Sweet the Moonlight Sleeps." Each choir in addition sang a piece of its own selection, Kensington rather unwisely choosing Eaton Faning's "Moonlight," which afforded no opportunity for exhibiting a contrast in quality. The choir were a little unfortunate in the matter of enunciation and blend of voices.

Mr. Merritt is an old campaigner, and his choir know him and his methods well enough to respond to their highest ability. The choir was rather more numerous than the previous one, and the singing of the test-piece was good, while the rendering of the "selected" piece, "Strike the Lyre," went far to merit a generous recognition from the adjudicator. Its rendering seemed to have so many good points that the subsequent award was somewhat of a surprise in more than one disinterested direction. The holders (Willessden) presented the largest company of any, and little points in the formation of the standing group were in their favour—indeed, some of the choirs would seem to have studied ineffectual grouping. The singing of the test-piece was the best hitherto heard, and "The Sea and its Pearls" (Pinsuti), their own selection, was admirably adapted to discover new powers in expression and fresh beauty of combination. The only possible drawback was the tendency of one or two voices to undue prominence, a fault easily excused (but not condoned) by an earnest desire to do the best possible for their own choir. The Camberwell Choir sang last—the test-piece well done, and the chosen item, Sullivan's "The Long Day Closes," admirably sung. The choir was one of the smallest, but the tone was good and the general effect very favourable.

The award being postponed until the evening concert, there remained nothing but a patient wait, although there was not much doubt as to the identity of the winning choir.

At six o'clock commenced the "great event" of the day—the festival concert with a choir of three thousand voices and the London Sunday School Orchestra. Mr. William Whiteman was the conductor of the choral forces, and Mr. Wesley Hammett, A.R.C.O., of the band. Mr. Horace G. Holmes presided at the organ. The opening item, "Rejoice to-day with one accord," was sung (with assistance from the audience) to Luther's Hymn. The select choir proved useful in several of the items in soli parts; and the second piece, Dr. Varley Roberts' "Seek ye the Lord," provided the soli tenors with a splendid opening, of which they availed themselves to the fullest extent. The piece lost tenderness as it was developed by the whole company, but the opening was a splendid bit of pure choral tone and fine expression. Dr. Warwick Jordan's hymn-anthem, "Before the ending of the day," is founded on "Rockingham," and contains separate solo passages for bass and soprano, the latter especially well done, but the basses needed strengthening both in numbers and in tone quality. Garrett's "In Humble Faith" lends itself to a full rendering, which it received with admirable precision. The closing chorus, "The heavens are telling" (trio by soli choir) was sufficiently well known to be "safe." The reluctance of the band to follow in the closing allegro movement caused a little "drag," which was

overcome in time to ensure a very fine finish with absolute unanimity. The volume of sound was very fine, and the chorus one of the best items. It would have been encored doubtless, but the interval had arrived, during which Mrs. H. E. Kershaw was to announce the decision in the choral contest. As anticipated, Willessden were again acclaimed victors (for the third time), having held the shield ever since its institution. Camberwell Choral Society was placed second. No particulars were given as to marks awarded, but the adjudicator's full written report will appear in our next issue.

The second part opened with Eaton Faning's "The Miller's Wooing"—quite varied enough for a giant choir, and which narrowly escaped an encore. Sullivan's "Rainy Day" was chiefly appreciated by reason of its discovery of the fine contralto voices, hitherto overshadowed by the more numerous sopranos. Löhr's "Slumber Song" would seem too delicate for such a large body of singers, but the expression was well studied, and the piece was redemanded. Balfe's "Excelsior!" (arranged for four voices) was also loudly acclaimed, and a repeat had to be granted. The orchestra, which played well under Mr. Wesley Hammett's sympathetic conductorship, contributed Elvey's "Festal March," Lachner's "March in B Flat," Auber's Marco Spada Overture, and Michael's Czardas No. 6, always a popular item, besides assisting in several of the choral pieces.

The choir deserve hearty words of praise for the very excellent attention to the conductor's beat, and the expression was in several instances very happily effected in answer to the *bâton*. If the concert could be treated as a rehearsal, with some few spoken instructions tending to further improvement in view of a further performance, the festival concert would take high rank among the annual fixtures at the Crystal Palace, for, although the voices, being exclusively London singers, lack the breadth and depth of our northern visitors, there is ample material for some excellent work in developing "light and shade," which is not always a strong point with more vigorous voices.

TALENT.

HAVE you a talent which the world refuses to recognise? The most miserable of all men is he who cherishes that constant delusion. It is pitiable to see the numbers of people in music, art and literature who are worrying, toiling and sacrificing everything in the hope of some day making their mark, and being acclaimed by the world as a wonder of genius, a brighter star than ever before shone in the firmament of their art. They dream and dream, and feel sore at society for not encouraging talent.

The fact is that there never has been an age when real talent was so quickly recognised as in this day. If a man can sing a song better, write a better story, deliver a more eloquent address, or paint a greater picture than anyone else, the world is sure to find him out. He may live in a garret in a great city, or in a log cabin in the backwoods, he may be surfeited with the luxuries of wealth or ground beneath the iron heel of poverty; but if he has within him the power to do something with a greater skill than others are master of, none of these things can keep him in obscurity. The world is ready to hail with acclamation the appearance of any man who can do things well.

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Allegro, maestoso. *Swell 8ft.*

The piano introduction is in G major, 4/4 time. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is played in the right hand, starting on G4, moving up stepwise to D5, then down to G4, and finally to E4. The left hand plays a bass line starting on G2, moving up to D3, then to G2, and finally to E2. The piece is marked *f* (forte) and *Gt. 8ft.* (Great 8 feet). The tempo is *Allegro, maestoso*. The dynamics are *f* and *p* (piano). The piece ends with a *Gt. to Ped.* (Great to Pedal) instruction.

Praise the Lord, O Je - ru - salem, Praise the Lord, O Je - ru - sa - lem,

Praise the Lord, Praise the Lord,
Praise the Lord, O Je - ru - salem, Praise the Lord, O Je - ru - sa - lem,

Praise the Lord, Praise the Lord,

Su. to Gt. Coupled. *ff* *Gt. Full to 16th*

The vocal and piano accompaniment is in G major, 4/4 time. The vocal melody is in the treble clef, starting on G4, moving up to D5, then down to G4, and finally to E4. The piano accompaniment is in the bass clef, starting on G2, moving up to D3, then to G2, and finally to E2. The piece is marked *ff* (fortissimo) and *Gt. Full to 16th* (Great Full to 16th). The tempo is *Allegro, maestoso*. The dynamics are *f* and *p* (piano). The piece ends with a *Gt. to Ped.* (Great to Pedal) instruction.

mf

praise thy God, O Zi-on, For He hath made fast the bars of thy

ff

mf

ff

Add Sv. Reeds.

gates, and hath bless - ed thy chil - dren with - in . . . thee, For He hath made fast the

mf *dim* *ff*

mf *dim* *ff* Add Reeds sf.

bars of thy gates, and hath bless-ed thy chil-dren with-in . . . thee. Praise the

Praise the

mf *dim* *ff*

mf *dim* *ff*

Shut off Reeds.

Praise the

- ru - salem, Praise the Lord, O Je - ru - sa - lem, *poco rall.* *più rall.*

Lord, Praise the Lord, Praise thy God, O Zi - on, Praise thy God.

- ru - salem, Praise the Lord, O Je - ru - sa - lem,

Lord, Praise the Lord,

poco rall. *più rall.*

Sw. Oboe 8ft.
Andante.

Legato p on 8ft.

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SOLO.

p

Thy eyes of all wait up - on Thee, O Lord, and Thou

pp

pp

giv - est them their meat in due sea - son. Thou o - pen - est Thine hand, and

ppp

dim.

fill - est all things liv - ing, and fill - est all things with plenteousness, and fill - est

dim. *f*

all things liv - ing with plen - teous - ness. The Lord is righ - teous in

mf

poco rall. *rall.*

all His ways, . . . and ho - ly in all His works.

p *poco rall.* *Colla voce.*

Tempo moderato. *f*

O sing un - to the Lord, O sing un - to the Lord with thanks - giv - ing,

Tempo moderato. *f*

Gt. 8ft. and 4ft.

Gt. to Ped.

with thanks - giv - ing, Sing praise up - on the harp un - to our God.

ff Add 16th. *dim* *mf* sft. only

mf The Lord, who cov-'reth the earth with clouds, who cov-'reth the earth with clouds, who
The Lord, who

The Lord, who cov-'reth the earth with clouds, The

Shut in Gt. to Ped. Ped. 16th. & 8th.

cov-'reth the earth with clouds, The Lord, who pre-par-eth rain for the earth, who ma - keth grass to

Lord, who pre - par - - eth rain for the earth,

grow up-on the moun - - tains. O sing un - to the Lord with thanksgiving, un-

f Gt. 8ft. & 4ft.

Gt. to Ped.

rall. Praise the Lord, O Je - ru - salem, Praise the

- to the Lord, O sing un-to the Lord. Praise the Lord,

sing un-to the Lord, O sing un-to the Lord. Praise the Lord, O Je - ru - salem, Praise the

Praise the Lord,

Allegro maestoso.

f Gt. Full to 18th

Lord, O Je - ru - salem,

mf Praise the Lord, praise thy God, O Zi - on, For He hath made fast the

Lord, O Je - ru - salem,

Praise the Lord,

mf Add Sw. Reeds. *ff*

mf *dim* *ff*

bars of thy gates, and hath bless-ed thy chil-dren with-in thee, for He hath made

mf *dim.* *ff* Add Reeds *sft.*

mf *dim* *ff*

fast the bars of thy gates, and hath bless-ed thy chil-dren with-in thee. Praise the

mf Shut off Reeds. *dim* *ff*

Lord, O Je-ru-sa-lem, Praise the Lord, O Je-ru-sa-lem, *mf*

ff Praise the Lord, Praise the Lord, praise thy God, O

Lord, O Je-ru-sa-lem, Praise the Lord, O Je-ru-sa-lem,

Praise the Lord, Praise the Lord, *mf*

Zi-on, Praise the Lord, O Je-ru-sa-lem, Praise the Lord, O Je-ru-sa-lem, Praise the Lord,

O Je-ru-sa-lem, Praise the Lord, Praise the Lord.

ral-len-tan-do.

Sung with great success, and encored, at the Nonconformist Choir Festival, Crystal Palace, June, 1906.

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The Hymn and its Tune.

BY E. GOOLD, M.A., B.MUS.

(Concluded from page 91.)

2.  E now come to a *Transition Period*, where there is a good deal of harmonic weakness. Old "Evan" and "Belmont" pall upon our ears now. They savour of harmonic weakness. They have not stood the test of time, just as the bulk of Watts' hymns and Tate and Brady's psalms are not to be found in our hymnals. Why is this? Let us transfer our thought to the hymns. At the time of which we are writing there were but few hymns besides the paraphrased psalms, and the Church wanted more. Watts set himself to write a hymn-book—a praiseworthy effort, but fancy it! No wonder he often became a mere rhymester. He set out to put dogmas into verse, as though dogma and poetry had a natural affinity. So, too, Tate and Brady and others. They all tried to put the psalms into English rhyme. Fancy a popular edition of "Paradise Lost" in common, long and short metres! The work sprang out of a noble intention, and it served its immediate purpose. Watts was inspired when he wrote "When I survey the wondrous Cross," and "Our God, our help in ages past," and "Jesus shall reign where'er the sun"—these are true classics, immortal lyrics for the church militant. So, too, were Tate and Brady when they wrote that lovely lyric based on the 42nd Psalm:

"As pants the hart for cooling streams,
When heated in the chase;
So pants my soul for Thee, O God,
And Thy refreshing grace."

We do not prize

"Where'er the man is found
That fears to offend his God;
That loves the gospel's joyful sound,
And trembles at the rod."

but we still sing with profit

"The Lord my shepherd is,
And He my soul will keep."

The tunes of the period were of a like mixed character. Tunes there were few, and the people wanted more. Fawcett seems to have written them "by the yard" in "Melodia Divina" (1841). He did not write for art, but for use. The tunes of this period are interesting, but only a very few have survived. In the paucity of original work Haydn and Handel and other classic musicians were utilised, and some popular glees were turned to account. Old "Prospect," known for many years as set to "There is a land of pure delight," is only the old love song, "Drink to me only with thine eyes."

This was a florid age, both in literature and music. The popular style was that in which later and in another department Balfe and Braham and Russell and Bishop wrote their glees and songs and ballads. It was a melodious and diatonic style. It

represents a reaction, too, against the strict ecclesiasticism of Cranmer's dictum, "one note to a syllable," and now we get often five or six notes to a syllable. There are several well defined phrases which belong to this period, as the florid cadence, and phrases used in imitation in treble and bass parts, and sometimes in thirds. The characteristics of these tunes are the frequent full close in the middle; they are all diatonic, and little relief of harmony or key. This was an age of grandiloquent language—a pompous, latinised style, with extremely florid musical expression. Here is a hymn—

"Erect your heads, eternal gates
Unfold to entertain
The King of Glory: see He comes
With His celestial train.

Who is the King of Glory, who?
The Lord, for strength renown'd
In battle mighty o'er His foes,
Eternal victory crown'd."

After singing that, it is quite natural to have a fanfare of trumpets and a roll of drums.

Among tunes of this period and style may be mentioned "Cranbrook," "Denbigh," "Lydia," "Nativity," "Celebration," "Dartford," "Flowerington," "Doncaster," some of them really good tunes of their style. The classic of the period is perhaps "Vital Spark," a tune still cherished in country Methodist circles. "Rockingham" still remains with us from this period, but "Neapolis," a lovely melody from one of Haydn's symphonies, has passed out of our tune-books.

There is a great deal of good music within the covers of "Melodia Divina." The tunes were loved by our grandfathers, they were easy—"to be understood of the people"—and the singers simply revelled in their "parts" with alternate snatches of imitative and fugal phrases.

It is tempting to linger over this period, for although we think differently and speak differently, and care little for some of the dogmas that people who sang these hymns held very dear, yet we know "there were giants in those days." It was the age of great preachers, of Whitefield and Wesley, and later on of Jay, of Bath, and John Angel James, of Birmingham, men of great spiritual force, and of eloquence and fire that speakers hardly possess in these days, at least in the same ornate setting. Their hymns and tunes have a roll of rhetoric fervour that belongs to a bygone age.

3. Coming now to the modern period, we have come on an age of growing freedom. Gradually all the resources of musical expression are open to the tune writer. As long as he obeys the canons of art which determine that he must make ornament and all else subservient to *use*, or in more musical phrase, the expression of a true feeling, he may use anything—any progression, any chord, any

transition, any contrast of key or rhythm, or time, to give life, feeling, expression to the music. Hence a feature of modern tunes. The best and greatest are set to special hymns. When Waite published his "Hallelujah" he expresses the reaction against the fugal and repeating tunes. In his preface he speaks of the anthem as having for its essential feature "special adaptation," *i.e.*, special music set to words of a particular text, and of a psalm tune as being of "general adaptation," *i.e.*, applicable to all, or many, hymns of the same metre. The tendency of to-day, however, is to make hymn-tunes of special rather than general adaptation. He speaks of repeats as "an outrage on common-sense, and an insult to the understanding of the people," and then confesses that "the tunes in the 'Hallelujah' will not be attractive at first, but when better known will be more admired." With Waite was associated Dr. Gauntlett, who afterwards joined Dr. Allon, of Islington, in his efforts to improve psalmody.

In this modern period we find tunes in which the melodic and harmonic characters are blended. Dr. Dykes' tunes are melodious, and yet I think you will find in every one of them characteristic harmonies that are inseparable from the tune—its very life and essence. Sullivan's tunes are very melodious, yet he has some most interesting harmonies and imitational passages, and sometimes long scale passages. The tune set to "I've found a friend" is a very joyous and intensely earnest tune. "St. Gertrude" has a clear imitation between the first line tenor and third line treble, and *vice versa*, while the martial character of the refrain is most effective. "Fortunatus" is full of imitation, and a most brilliant and masterly tune. Stainer's tunes are of very sterling worth, full of character, and yet with the inspiration of a thoughtful and scientific mind. The names of J. W. Elliott, W. H. Calcott, A. H. Brown, Baptiste Calkin will call to mind many tunes full of character and force. Barnby is very unequal, often far-fetched, in his harmonies, and uncongregational in style. His fine march in the Hymnary (No. 640) is degraded by being set to words about "surpliced hosts" marching to victory. His "Sleep thy last sleep" is a wonderful composition, full of the most tender feeling. His tune to "When I survey" may rank, I think, among the very finest compositions (Hymnary, No. 251). It will be interesting to compare three settings of this fine hymn, which form a most instructive study of how differently the same words have found musical setting. First take "Crucifixion" ("Melodia Divina," No. 38), a most extraordinary composition, full of flourishes, and grandiloquent cadences, its whole spirit diametrically opposed to the pathetic grandeur of the hymn. Then take "Rockingham," a sweetly flowing, easy tune, full of simple tenderness and pathos. Then take Barnby's. It is in C minor. What expression is in every chord! How sublime and pathetic! The exquisite, excruciating suggestion of pain in the second chord—"a minor 13th"—the highest, acutest discord there is, and after that comes a restful change to a major key. The plaintive succession of rising semi-tones

on the accented part of the bar, and the strong, triumphant drop from dominant to tonic at the end form of a master touch of musical expression. The whole range of psalmody can hardly produce so fine an example of rich feeling.

There were many minor tunes among the old ones, and the Welsh tunes are largely minor, but in the use of the minor in contrast with the major is quite modern. Josiah Booth's tunes give some fine examples of this—"Commonwealth," for instance—as fine a solo as it is a tune—has contrasts of key, unison, and harmony, and also of rhythm. His other tune, to "Christian does thou see them," is equally instructive and effective. Of a very different character, and illustrating great freedom of rhythm, is that bright and lovely hymn of praise, "My God, my King, Thy praise I sing." I shall never forget the singing one winter morning at the City Temple, when Mr. Minshall was organist, of Sullivan's tune to "Winter reigneth o'er the land," to Sullivan's "Clarence." The first four verses are in E minor, with a unison opening. The effect, sung softly and slowly, with the accompaniments of soft organ and a trio of brass, was most subdued and intense, till at the fifth verse, "But the sleeping earth shall wake, And the flowers shall burst in bloom," the tune is changed to E major, the altos singing the original unison melody of the first line. Here the whole feeling was changed, the organ was increased, the pace quickened, and the trumpets brightened their tone; it was like a bursting forth of sunshine and warm joyousness after the contemplation of the sadder things of life. The effect was thrilling, and the great congregation felt the impulse of the soul that led it. I have never heard a more perfect rendering in congregational worship.

I should like also to refer to a minor tune by Edmund Sedding, set to the hymn "I need Thee, precious Jesu," to which the late Sir Robert Stewart added a major setting for the last verse, where the sentiment of the hymn alters from that of confession and the contemplation of human need to that of faith and hope—"I need Thee, precious Jesu, And hope to see Thee soon." The complete setting by the two musicians results in a lovely inspiration.

The study of the form and meaning of tunes is inexhaustible, and on how small soever a scale it is done, it is useful and good. We need to think about the tunes we use. They cannot be interpreted, played or sung properly, without a knowledge of their character, and though this may in most measure lie on the surface, there is always more to be learned by study and thought and a bringing of one's mind into sympathy with the music, and such study must have its fruit in the more complete and more sympathetic rendering of the service of praise in the Lord's house.

THE Handel Festival is being held at the Crystal Palace as we go to press. Judging from what was heard on the rehearsal day, the Festival promises to be as great a success as ever. Dr. Cowen, as conductor, is the right man in the right place.

Nonconformist Choir Union.

EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL FESTIVAL.



THE annual fixture of the Nonconformist Choir Union was this year attended by very considerable success. It is pleasant to record that a large increase of interest in the Festival had been noticed throughout the period of preparation for the event, and a keen demand for the books of music led to an early exhaustion of the number prepared, and in the end some choirs were disappointed in not obtaining the copies they needed. Under the circumstances, it was not surprising to find a very large number of singers gathered on the Handel Orchestra—larger indeed than has been the case for some years. The "railway difficulty," which bid fair at one time to put an end to the Union's existence, would seem to have been overcome, as there were choirs from as far distant as Bradford, Birmingham, Swindon, Salisbury, Brighton and Folkestone, with nearly sixty other choirs from intermediate towns, together with five Choir Unions. From the "larger London" district and the Metropolis proper, over 100 choirs entered, town and country combining to yield a total membership of over five thousand. The influence of the Festival on the choirs of the Free Churches is undoubtedly altogether to their benefit, and the increasingly large number of choirs who take part is a distinct encouragement to the founders and the committee of management.

The day's proceedings commenced at 11.15 with the choral competitions. These were divided into two classes, as usual—Class A for choirs of between twenty-six and forty voices, for which there were eight entries, and Class B for choirs of not less than sixteen and not more than twenty-five voices, which attracted four contestants. For the larger choirs the test piece was Gounod's "Send out Thy Light," and the prize was a cheque for five guineas, the custody of the silver challenge shield, and a silver-mounted baton, which was presented by Mr. Arthur Berridge, the secretary. For the smaller choirs the test piece was Thomas Adams' "The Glory of the Lord." Both classes were adjudicated upon by Mr. W. Harding Bonner. A goodly company gathered to hear the contests, and a great amount of interest was evinced as the successive choirs came and went. The competitors in Class B were Heaton Road, P.M., Bradford (Mr. J. S. Witty), Reigate Congregational (Mr. F. J. Buckland), Rushden Park Road Wesleyan (Mr. F. Betts), and Biggleswade Baptist (Mr. C. W. Larkinson). The result left the Reigate choir a rather easy winner.

In Class A Heaton Road, Bradford, again entered, while London was represented by Walworth Road Baptist Choir (Mr. J. Nettleton Taylor), and the Lewisham Congregational (Mr. Frank Idle, A.R.A.M.). Kingston-on-Thames Congregational (Mr. G. E. Hart), Earl's Barton Baptist (Mr. W. A. Hart), (Rushden Baptist (Mr. Joseph Farey), Barnsley M.N.C. (Mr. John E. Ward), and Bilston Wesleyan (Mr. F. A. Bendall) made up the total, and an excellent contest took place between the aspirants for the honour of appearing as the prize choir. Some former victors from Rushden and Bilston (holders of the first challenge shield by virtue of three consecutive victories) met the present holders (Lewisham Congre-

gational) with the new-comers more or less in the rear, except Earl's Barton, who proved to be one point ahead of Bilston. The judge is making a detailed report of the various characteristics of the several choirs, so that extensive notice is not here needed. Suffice it to say that the winning choir (Lewisham) were one point ahead of Rushden Baptist, so that the award was again in their favour.

The great event of the day was, of course, the mass concert held on the Handel Orchestra at four o'clock. This was preceded by a recital on the great organ by Mr. Edgar A. Smith (organist, Muswell Hill Congregational Church).

At the concert Mr. E. Minshall conducted for the eighteenth time. The soloist for the occasion was Miss Lucie Johnstone. Mr. Fountain Meen was a tower of strength at the organ, accompanying throughout with good taste and judgment. Mr. Edgar A. Smith accompanied the solo numbers on the concert grand piano. The programme opened with Horatio Parker's anthem, "The Lord is my Light," in which the massive chorus was heard to great advantage, the quality of the men's voices being especially noticeable. The anthem was marked by good attack and a fine volume of tone.

Miss Lucie Johnstone—always welcome in Nonconformist circles by reason of her association with the City Temple—sang Lewis Carey's "Nearer my God to Thee," with organ obligato. The next choir item was an anthem by W. A. Montgomery, Mus. Bac., "The Lord is my Shepherd." The anthem contains plenty of variety in the earlier portion, with a brisk closing movement ("Surely goodness and mercy"), which received adequate treatment and was well executed. The number met with general acceptance.

Mr. Fountain Meen's skilful rendering of Bach's Fugue in E flat ("St. Anne") was much appreciated and received hearty recognition alike from choir and audience.

Dr. Ferris Tozer's setting of "Through the night of doubt and sorrow" next followed—a little unsteady in places, but sung with fervour and determination. As the Union had decided to do without their own orchestra this year, the Crystal Palace Military Band was engaged for the occasion, and their rendering of Elgar's "Pomp and Circumstance" march was, of course, marked with all the excellencies of so good a combination. The "March" was vigorously redemanded, and the closing movement was repeated. Mr. Fountain Meen joined the band on the organ with good effect.

The anthem, "Sing Praises unto the Lord" (W. A. C. Cruickshank), has a closing movement of jubilation, this being finely rendered.

Miss Lucie Johnstone's next solo, "The Lost Chord," was marred by the playing of a piano in the music exhibition near by, and by the striking of the quarters and the hour of the tubular bells also on exhibit. Notwithstanding these drawbacks—admirably conquered by the artiste—the song narrowly escaped an encore, which, under the circumstances, would hardly have been given.

Stainer's anthem, "I am Alpha and Omega," with its fine cathedral effects, was sung with apparent enjoyment—the soprano solo being very finely sung as was also the final bass unison passage.

Mr. Fountain Meen's second solo was Lefebure Wely's "March in C," which received its meed of praise.

The most trying piece in Part I., "O, Great is the Depth" (Mendelssohn), was negotiated with steadiness in all parts. The presentation of prizes to the successful choirs in the competition was now made by Miss Lucie Johnstone.

The second part opened with a good piece of part writing, "A Slumber Song," which was well sung with careful attention to expression. The military band rendered a "Selection" from Tannhäuser, which, of course, found general favour.

Miss Lucie Johnstone's solo, "Abide with me," was one of the gems of the afternoon, and was much admired. The madrigal, "Come let us join the roundelay," and the rendering of the test piece by the prize choir brought the programme to a close. Three part songs (including Hemery's "The Hour of Rest") were reluctantly omitted, the concert having lasted over two hours. Very general opinions were expressed, flattering to the choirs' singing both in quality of tone and execution.

The organisation was well carried out under the guidance of the genial and painstaking secretary, Mr. Arthur Berridge, whose able predecessor, Mr. T. R. Croger, now enjoyed a seat of ease in front

of the choir. Mr. F. W. Ainger (City Temple) was again captain of the orchestra, and laid his plans and led his forces so admirably that the choir were "placed" easily and effectively.

The last attraction was an evening concert, at which a largely different chorus, composed of the Bradford competition choir and about 100 London singers, gave a rendering of a new cantata by Mr. Arthur Berridge, founded on "Nicodemus." The soloists, Miss L. Richardson (soprano), Miss Lucy Bennett (contralto), Mr. Fletcher Hird (tenor), and Mr. Alfred Monk (bass), were all from Yorkshire; while Mr. Witty presided at the organ. Miss Emmie Barber, G.S.M., was efficient at the grand piano, and the chorus sang with attention and appreciation. The work is of a fairly easy character, the narrative well worked out, with appropriate musical treatment—the little work lasting about an hour. Mr. Berridge conducted the choir, and a very large audience remained throughout the whole time.

So closed a successful and gratifying day—pleasing alike to the organisers, participants, and, we trust, the listeners. Of its educational value it is needless to speak, and its attractive influence on the next festival will doubtless be felt when the time arrives to prepare for the nineteenth annual festival.

Nonconformist Choir Union Competitions.

ADJUDICATOR'S REPORT.



ONE great object of these choir contests is to bring about such improvement of the choir singing as will make it more and more an aid to devotion in the Divine worship of the sanctuary. The ideality of devotional worship is aided by artistic beauty, and the more artistic and beautiful the singing of the choir, the greater the aid to devotion. Some of the choirs heard at the contests would be a great aid to devotion; others not so much so. But all will be better for the training they have gone through, and the disappointed ones will realise it better after a short time. All should be determined to go on working up to the highest pitch of excellence that their circumstances and material will permit.

At my own request it was arranged that I should sit with my back to the choirs, and I had no information as to names of choirs or conductors, nor did I see a copy of the programme until after the contest. I was, therefore, quite unbiassed, and could only go by what I heard.

The system of giving marks is objected to by some authorities, but long and varied experience has proved that where there are a number of competitors and where the contest is a close one, some system of marks is a necessary aid. I gave marks under the following heads:—1, Tone quality; 2, Tune and Time; 3, Phrasing and Rhythm; 4, Expression; 5, Pronunciation and clearness of words; ten marks each, giving a possible fifty for each piece; total, 100.

Class B. Choirs of sixteen to twenty-five voices. Test piece, "The glory of the God of Israel," by Thomas Adams (Novello and Co.). A very suitable test piece, and one that would be useful to the choirs.

Choir No. 1. Heaton Road Primitive Methodist Church choir, Bradford; conductor, Mr. J. S. Witty.—The test piece was taken faster than metronome rate, and was not majestic enough. The C sharp in treble, top of p. 5, was doubtful. Slight scooping in some cases. Two or three of the basses were rough, and did not blend well. Final consonants were not always clear. The secular piece, "Awake, Æolian lyre," by Danby, was well sung on the whole. The soprano G, top of p. 2, was scooped, and not dead in tune. The *dim.* at "Drink life" was not soft enough. The attack was not perfect. The runs on last page were not clear enough, and the "roar" sounded "raw." The general effect of this choir was good, if somewhat rough. Smoothness of tone and good blending should be worked for. Marks, seventy-nine.

Choir No. 2. Reigate Congregational Church Choir; conductor, Mr. F. J. Buckland.—The test piece was sung at about the proper rate, and gained much in effect thereby. The bass phrase at top of p. 3 was not so perfect as it might have been, and the soprano G at bottom of p. 5 was doubtful in attack; but the slow movement on p. 4 was beautifully sung. Löhr's "A Slumber Song" was delicately and charmingly rendered; perhaps a trifle fast in some places, which prevented the words being quite as clear as they might have been. But the one or two weak points were quite compensated for by the fine tone, the intelligent expression, and the blending of voices. The singing of this choir in a service would elevate the thoughts and assist the devotions of a congregation. Marks, ninety-seven, and the prize.

Choir No. 3. Rushden Park Road Wesleyan Church Choir; conductor, Mr. F. Betts.—Sang with good attack and body of tone. The basses were full, but one or two voices did not blend.

The tenors seemed of poor quality, which marred the men's unison passages. The swells were lumpy, and the *fortes* not ringing. Rather tame effect. Pinsuti's "The Parting Kiss" was taken rather too quickly in parts. A number of points were tamely rendered, as though the singers were singing of the kiss of an elderly aunt. The high G's in soprano and tenor, top of p. 37, were doubtful. The ending might have been better rendered. This choir has good material, but lacks earnestness. If the members will put more life and soul into their singing, they will take a higher place next time. Marks, eighty-nine, and commended.

Choir No. 4. Biggleswade Baptist Church Choir; conductor, Mr. C. W. Larkinson.—Sounded as though it was a smaller choir than others. Blending not good. Tenors poor in quality; basses not good tone. One or two sopranos sang out of tune sometimes, and *forte* all through. The chorale at end was not devotional enough. The word "near" sounded "nee-ur." Birch's "Excelsior!" (pronounced by them "Excelsiaw") was tamely rendered, and lacked the expression and varied style demanded by the story. This choir showed possibilities of good tone when singing softly, and will improve if attention is given to voice training and expression. Marks, seventy-seven.

Class A. Choirs of twenty-six to forty voices. Test piece, "Send out Thy light," by Gounod (Metzler and Co.). Music worthy of the best choirs, and a splendid test.

Choir No. 5. Heaton Road Primitive Methodist Church Choir, Bradford; conductor, Mr. J. S. Witty.—Test-piece too fast. Opening rather coarse. High G in soprano forced, and some scooping. Blending and attack defective. Final consonants weak. Cooke's "Strike the Lyre" better sung than the anthem; *sfs.* too forced, and expression sometimes overdone. Phrasing not perfect. Ending full and good. General effect fairly good, especially when singing softly. Marks, seventy-nine.

Choir No. 6. Walworth Road Baptist Chapel Choir, London; conductor, Mr. Nettleton Taylor.—Opening rather good. Bass phrase, p. 4, weak, especially the second time. Tenors forced when singing loudly. Altos good. Pages 6 and 8 too fast for words. Final consonants indistinct. Attack not always unanimous. "Strike the Lyre" sung too fast. Vowels cockneyfied and not open enough. *Ritard.* at top of p. 5 too slow. Phrasing not perfect. This choir contains some good, fresh voices, and will well repay further training. Marks, seventy-eight.

Choir No. 7. Bilston Wesleyan Church Choir; conductor, Mr. F. A. Bendall.—Full, vigorous tone, but rather rough in loud passages. High G's defective, and A flat rather forced. Final consonants unfinished. The part-song, "Come, May, with all thy flowers," by Cowen, was sung in better style than the anthem. The sopranos not always unanimous. Blending and general effect good. Marks, ninety-one; commended.

Choir No. 8. Kingston-on-Thames Congregational Church Choir; conductor, Mr. Eaton Hart.—This choir lost heavily through singing badly out of tune. It had many other faults, but correct intonation is the first essential. Marks, forty-six.

Choir No. 9. Earls Barton Baptist Church Choir; conductor, Mr. W. A. Hart.—Anthem too fast. Attack and tone good, but blending and balance of parts not perfect. Tenors sometimes

rough and forced. Elgar's "Weary Wind of the West" was well sung on the whole, but rather fast. Tenors weak in parts. Words not distinct in *piu mosso*. Ending very good; true *pianissimo*. General effect good. Marks, ninety-two; commended.

Choir No. 10. Lewisham Congregational Church Choir; conductor, Mr. Frank Idle, A.R.A.M.—The anthem was taken at the proper rate, and had a much more devotional effect. The balance of parts and blending were excellent, *pianos* beautiful. Elgar's "My Love Dwelt in a Northern Land" was rendered with much delicacy and refinement. A slight flattening was passed over as being of little account in such an excellent performance. This choir shows the most admirable training. It may be that it has advantages over other choirs in the matter of voices and material, but the adjudicator has to take the result he hears at the moment, and award the prize to the best he hears; and there can be no doubt that this choir was the best. Marks, one hundred, and the challenge shield (for the second year in succession).

Choir No. 11. Rushden Park Road Baptist Church Choir; conductor, Mr. Joseph Farey.—Pace good. Slight uncertainties of intonation on pp. 4 and 6. Pinsuti's "When Hands Meet" beautifully rendered, if somewhat slow in parts. This is a fine choir, with much enthusiasm, but it was sadly marred by a hard, metallic alto voice. I could not see the choir, but fancy it must contain a hard, male alto voice, which quite spoils the otherwise fine choir. I think I ought to have taken off more marks, but without this alto singer I should have found it more difficult to decide the winner. Marks, ninety-eight, and highly commended.

Choir No. 12. Barnsley Ebenezer Methodist New Connexion Church Choir; conductor, Mr. J. E. Ward.—The bass passages were much out of tune, and the intonation was faulty in other parts. The vowel qualities were too varied for good blending; words indistinct, and final consonants defective. The soft parts were much better than the loud. Leslie's "Lullaby of Life" was better sung than the anthem, but some voices (basses especially) did not blend, and the *adagio* was unsteady. Still, there is some capital material in this choir, and it will repay regular, steady training. Marks, sixty.

W. HARDING BONNER.

HYTHE NONCONFORMIST CHOIR UNION.

THIS energetic Union gave a very successful concert in the Institute on May 30th. The choral numbers were those performed at the annual N.C.U. Festival at the Crystal Palace, and they were sung with much credit. A small orchestra accompanied several of the pieces. C.S.M.I. (Company-Sergt.-Major-Instructor) J. Bostock ably conducted, and to him the present satisfactory condition of this Union is largely due. The following contributed appreciated solo items to the programme, viz.:—Miss Evenden, Miss Chanteri, Miss E. W. Owen, L.R.A.M., Mr. Stainer, and Mr. Wallingford. Miss Owen was a thoroughly efficient accompanist. There was a large audience, many having to stand.

At the close of the final rehearsal on June 14th, the Mayor, on behalf of the choir, presented Miss E. Owen, the accompanist, with a handsome brooch, and the Rev. E. Goodison presented the conductor, C.S.M.I. Bostock, with a useful ink-stand.

Recital Programmes.

ST. IVES.—In Wesleyan Church, by Mr. F. Gostelow,
A.R.A.M., F.R.C.O., A.R.C.M. :—

Overture No. 1 in C	Hollins
Air with Variations in A	Haydn-Best
Fugue in D major	Bach
Melody in F	Rubinstein
Romance and Finale from Suite in F minor	W. R. Driffl
Easter Offertoire	Batiste
Chant sans Paroles	Tschaikowsky
Toccata	F. W. Holloway
"Prayer and Cradle Song"	Guilmant
March in E flat	Wely

CAMBERWELL GREEN.—In Congregational Church,
by Mr. Alfred B. Choat :—

March from Op. No. 27	Schubert
"Arietta"	Coleridge-Taylor
Postlude in A	Warriner
Pastorale in E	Lemare
Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor	Bach
Grand Offertoire in D	Batiste
"Nazareth"	Gounod
"Wren Melody"	A. B. Choat
Grand Chorus in D	Guilmant

LUTON.—In Union Chapel, by Mr. Fred Gostelow,
F.R.C.O., A.R.A.M., A.R.C.M. :—

Overture, No. 2, in C minor	Hollins
Air with Variations in A	Haydn-Best
Toccata in F	J. S. Bach
Prayer and Cradle Song	Guilmant
Scherzo Symphonique	Guilmant
Easter Offertoire	Batiste
Pastorale in E	Lemare
Scherzo in F	Hofmann
Intermezzo	Hollins
Overture	Auber

LONDON.—In Regent Square Presbyterian Church,
by Mr. H. C. J. Churchill :—

Fantasia and Fugue in G minor	Bach
Gavotte in E minor	Rameau
Canzona	Wheeldon
Fanfare	Lemmens
Sonata No. 1	Mendelssohn
Romance in D flat	Lemare
Grand Chœur	Hollins

THATCHAM.—In Congregational Church, by Mr.
A. H. Drury, F.R.C.O. :—

Grand Chorus in D	Guilmant
Toccata and Fugue in D minor	Bach
A Sunset Melody	Dr. Vincent
Suile Gothique	Boëllmann
Communion in G	Guilmant
Jubilant March	Faulkes

WILLESDEN.—In Presbyterian Church, by Mr. Theo.
Keynes, F.R.C.O., L.R.A.M. :—

Fantasia and Toccata	Stanford
Allegretto in E flat	Wolstenholme
Sonata No. 4 in B flat	Mendelssohn
Toccata and Fugue in the Dorian Mode	Bach
Cantilène Pastorale	Guilmant
Postlude in D	Smart

GOODMAYES.—In Congregational Church, by Mr.
Henry Riding, F.R.C.O. :—

Fugue, "St. Anne's"	Bach
Andantino	E. H. Lemare
Introduction, Air and Variations	W. G. Wood
Scherzo	Hofmann
Largo	Haydn
Andante	Reinecke
Serenata	Moszkowski
"March of the Crusaders"	Liszt

Echoes from the Churches.

A copy of "The Choirmaster," by John Adcock, will be sent every month to the writer of the best paragraph under this heading. Paragraphs should be sent direct to the Editor, by the 17th of the month. The winning paragraph in this issue was sent by Mr. Hextall.

PROVINCIAL.

DARTMOUTH.—On Wednesday, May 23rd, re-opening services were held at the Flavel Memorial (Congregational) Church, and were of a very successful character. In the afternoon Divine Service was held in the church at three o'clock, a sermon being preached by the Rev. W. Cuthbertson, B.A., of Dawlish. In the evening an organ and vocal recital was given by Dr. Orlando A. Mansfield, organist and choirmaster of Belgrave Church, Torquay, and Mrs. Mansfield (Mdlle. Jutz). The recital was greatly enjoyed, Dr. Mansfield displaying abundant evidence of his talent as an organist, whilst the sacred solos by Mrs. Mansfield, who is the possessor of a rich contralto voice, were delightfully rendered. The Mayor of Torquay (Councillor J. Smerdon) presided, and was supported by the Mayor of Dartmouth (Dr. Searle) and by the pastor of the church (the Rev. J. H.

Paynter). In spite of the inclement weather, the audience was large and of a most appreciative disposition.

DONCASTER (THORNE).—A new organ was opened on June 16th in the Methodist U.C. Church by Mr. S. E. Worton, R.A.M., of Elland. Messrs. Wadsworth, of Manchester, are the builders, and the instrument gives great satisfaction. The programme at the initial recital comprised extracts from the works of Haydn, Wheeldon, Dr. Roberts, Schubert, Macfarren, besides an impromptu by the organist. Special requests were made for other impromptus at the Sunday services. Mr. Worton officiated at the organ on each occasion.

EALING.—On Sunday evening, the 11th ult., the last of a series of eight monthly "People's Services" was given at the Congregational Church (Rev. W. Garrett Horder). One of the special features of these services has been the vocal and

instrumental music that has been introduced. As a rule, there has been a short organ recital before the service, while during the service room has been made for a couple of vocal numbers by a soloist, an instrumental solo (violin or violoncello), three hymns from "Worship Song," and two anthems, with (where the parts were obtainable) string accompaniment. Mr. Lloyd Hartley, the organist, has gathered together fourteen very capable players that never fail to play in time, and were heard each evening with the organ in the final voluntary. By the crowded attendance on these occasions and the obvious failure to play the congregation out, it is evident that the Congregationalists of Ealing appreciate, not only a popular address, but also music of varied and high grade character well executed.

GUILDFORD.—A concert was given in the Congregational Large Hall on Wednesday, May 30th, by the members and friends of the church choir, under the conductorship of Mr. T. Hextall (choirmaster), which proved highly interesting to a large audience and to all the performers. The first part consisted of songs, solos, and part songs, of which special mention should be made of Gounod's "Serenade," sung by Mrs. Peatfield in a charming manner, with violin obbligato by Mr. W. Woods, and was redemanded most enthusiastically; also Hope-Temple's "Rory Darlin'," by Miss Carling, and the aria from "Samson," "Honour and Arms," given by Mr. H. Underwood, who was in splendid voice. The choir were very successful in Hatton's "Softly fall the shades of evening," Cornwall's "O, my love is like a red, red rose," and a four-part arrangement of Watson's "Anchored," which was given in a highly effective manner and persistently re-demanded. Violin solos by Mr. W. Woods were most artistically rendered. The second part was that old favourite, Macfarren's "May Day," in which the choir had the assistance of a small but efficient orchestra, under the leadership of Mr. W. Woods. The cantata was given with a crispness and freshness that delighted the audience from the beginning to the end. Miss Carling efficiently accompanied on the piano throughout, while Mr. W. J. Furlong presided at the organ. The whole concert was highly creditable to all concerned.

RICHMOND (SURREY).—The combined choral and flower festival is one of the most popular services held during the year at the Vineyard Congregational Church, and although the weather on Sunday, May 27th (the day chosen for the celebration this year), was not all that might have been desired, the congregations during the day were good. The building had been very tastefully adorned with flowers, palms, and ferns for the occasion. The singing throughout the day was rendered by the full choir of thirty-eight members. The "Te Deum," to F. Lyne in D flat, was sung as the morning anthem, the anthem in the evening being Barnby's fine composition, "Lift up your hearts." After the address at the evening service, the first part of Haydn's "Creation" was given. The choruses went with much spirit, the well-balanced choir having a thorough grip of the whole work. Mrs. F. Lyne sang, with artistic ease, the difficult soprano solos. The work of the bass soloist was divided between Mr. L. Deayton and Mr. Frank C. Wheeler. The former was in fine voice, and sang the descriptive recitative, "And God made the firmament" excellently, while the latter vocalist rendered the difficult recitative and air, "Rolling in the foaming billows," with much

distinction. The tenors were Messrs. T. Bishop and S. Deayton. Especially noteworthy was the delightful ease which distinguished the work of the former, while the latter successfully essayed the melodious "In native worth." Not a little of the credit for the excellence of the music throughout the day was due to the organist, Miss Jessie Matthews. In addition to skilfully accompanying the solos, the organist so "carried" the chorus that, though without a conductor, there was never the slightest hitch.

TORQUAY.—On Sunday, May 27th, "Choir Sunday" was celebrated at Belgrave Congregational Church, when special collections, which met with a most gratifying response, were taken on behalf of the choir funds, and special music was rendered by the choir. The vocal numbers included, in addition to chants and hymns, Dr. Mansfield's prize anthem, "He shall be great," which went with great firmness and breadth; Dudley Buck's "The God of Abraham praise"; Berthold Tours's "In Thee, O Lord"; and Elliott Button's "Who is this so weak and helpless?" all of which were sung with that taste, accuracy, and freedom from effort or performance which are becoming constant features of the singing of the choir of Belgrave Church. Dr. Mansfield, the organist and choirmaster of the church, presided at the organ, and contributed as voluntaries the first and last movements of Mendelssohn's 4th Sonata, Merkel's Pastorale in G, and Dr. Mansfield's arrangement of Neustedt's "Les Vœux."

WALTON (LIVERPOOL).—On Wednesday, May 9th, about twenty members of the Congregational Church choir journeyed to Tattenhall, a pretty village between Chester and Crewe. The occasion was the 110th anniversary of the little Congregational Church there. In the afternoon a service was conducted by the Rev. H. N. Henderson, of Bangor, after which tea was provided in the school-room. In the evening a sacred concert was given, for which the choir secretary had promised to provide the programme. The choir gave several items, and the following members contributed solos: Mrs. Radnall, Miss Watson, Miss Jessie Campbell, Mr. Radnall, Mr. James Knowles, and Mr. Manod Owen. The duties of accompanist were efficiently discharged by the organist, Miss Knowles. The Rev. E. Davies, minister of the church, presided, and at the close of the concert referred in very grateful and appreciative terms to the efforts of those who had taken part. The visit was thoroughly enjoyed by all, and the choir returned to Liverpool feeling that they had been able to render a service to the friends at Tattenhall, who are carrying on their work amid discouragements and difficulties that are peculiar to village Nonconformity.

FOLKESTONE NONCONFORMIST CHOIR UNION.

At the final rehearsal on June 11th, a presentation of a handsome marble timepiece was made to Mrs. Walton, the efficient accompanist of this Union. Brief speeches were made by Mr. Bramley (choirmaster, Wesleyan Church), Mr. Lepper (choirmaster, Tontine Street Congregational Church), Mr. Pope (organist, Baptist Church), and Mr. Strange (hon. secretary of Radnor Park Congregational Church), after which Mr. Minshall, on behalf of the members of the Union, made the presentation. Mrs. Walton made an excellent speech in reply, and Mr. Walton also spoke.

New Music.

NOVELLO AND CO., BERNERS STREET, W.

Introduction and Fugue in E flat; Introduction and Fugue in A, by Dr. James Nares; *Two Pieces*, by Jonathan Battishill; *Three Seventeenth Century Pieces*, by Edward Gibbons and Matthew Lock.—These constitute Nos. 17, 18, 19, and 20 of Old English Organ Music, ably edited by John E. West. While all are interesting, the two pieces by Battishill (No. 19) will probably be found the most useful.

The Village Organist.—Book 41 contains seven pieces, viz., three originally written for the organ and four arrangements of vocal compositions. The *Allegro Pomposo* seems to be the best item in the book. Book 42 contains six pieces, the *Allegretto Giocoso* (E. A. Dicks) and *Pastorella* (F. A. Challinor) being the most important.

In Springtime. Pianoforte solo, by Willem Coenen.—A graceful and pleasing composition.

Eastern Dance and Intermezzo, from the music to "Aero," by S. Coleridge-Taylor.—These two pieces are well arranged for pianoforte and violin, and also for pianoforte solo.

To Daffodils. Part song by Harold E. Darke.—A very effective and creditable part song by a young and promising composer, to whose future we look forward with interest and hopefulness.

Evening Scene. Part song by Edward Elgar.—A very welcome addition to the repertoire of choral societies. It is full of "points," and if sung by a capable choir could not fail to be greatly appreciated.

Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis for Boys' Voices. By John E. West.—An excellent three-part setting that will be very useful to Church choirs.

BEAL, STUTTARD AND CO., 16, OXFORD CIRCUS, W.

Melodious and Progressive Studies. By Ellis Riley.—These are very useful studies, issued in six books. Book 1 is before us, and is marked "Easy." The studies are varied in style and the instructions given with each are clear and definite. Young students ought to get much help from them. The other books are "Progressive," "Moderate," "Brilliant," "Advanced," and "Difficult."

PITMAN, HART AND CO., PATERNOSTER ROW.

The Treasures of the Deep. Cantata, by George Shinn, Mus.Bac. 1s.—The words of this cantata are by Mrs. Hemans, and they have been well set to music by Mr. Shinn. There are altogether seventeen numbers. The choruses are broad and effective, and the solos are melodious and easy. The work can be taken up by any average choir, and it will prove interesting to singers and audience. Band parts for a small orchestra can be obtained.

Accidentals.

"DID you hear Kubelik play? They say he has a Stradivarius."

"Mercy! Has he? Where did he get it?"

"In Germany, I believe."

"Too bad! And can't the doctors do anything for it?"

Correspondence.

TOWNS AND HYMN TUNES.

To the Editor of THE MUSICAL JOURNAL.

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Cuthbert Hadden's "Passing Notes" are always interesting, and his article in the May number on "Towns and Hymn Tunes" was especially so to hymnody lovers and collectors. We are indebted to him for being the means of gaining, by Mr. Carey Bonner's courtesy, the history of "Leominster"—or, to now give it its proper name, "The Pilgrim's Song"—further enhanced by the copy given of tune as written by Mr. Martin.

In further reference to "Evan," I happen to possess a copy of the American collection in which this pleasing tune first appeared, entitled "Temple Melodies," and published by Mason Bros., New York, 1836 (the query suggests itself whether there was any relationship between publisher and composer?), the tune appearing on page 63 in 4 flats as setting to Hymns 163, 164, and 165, commencing lines, "With cheerful heart I close my eyes," "How sweet and heavenly is the sight," and "Oh! for a closer walk with God." The following is an extract from the Preface: "By a special arrangement with Mr. Lowell Mason, the Editor (name does not transpire) has been permitted to make copious selections from all the published works of this gentleman; whereby those excellent and useful tunes of world-wide popularity, of which he is the author, have been brought together into one volume."

From what we now know of this tune, should not Lowell Mason and the Rev. Havergal's names appear jointly as composers—melody by Rev. Havergal, harmony by Lowell Mason?

Referring to beautiful old "Wareham," it may not be generally known that it forms a fine setting to Wesley's "All ye that pass by," the change from L.M. to 5.5.11.5.5.11 being simply brought about by omitting the slurs in the melody and reading the semibreve in the fourth bar of the third measure as two minims! The tune "Harwich," usually associated with this hymn, has always seemed to me of two "jumpy" a character—the words requiring more serious treatment. This is accomplished in connecting it with "Wareham"! This is a curious and, possibly, unique instance of a tune answering for two or more hymns of such diverse metres as we have here!—Yours faithfully,

East Putney, S.W.

H. TAYLOR.

To Correspondents.

A. R. (Selby).—We do not think it is possible. Your best plan is to ask Messrs. Estey and Co.

ENQUIRER.—The anthem is not suitable for your choir of twenty voices, as the parts are doubled in several places.

C. F.—The firm you name will carry out the work to your satisfaction, we have no doubt.

The following are thanked for their communications:—J. M. (Newport), C. R. T. (Birmingham), W. W. (York), T. R. A. (Inverness), R. T. (Leamington), C. C. (Peckham), J. P. D. (Builth), H. T. (Walsall), D. O. (Taunton).



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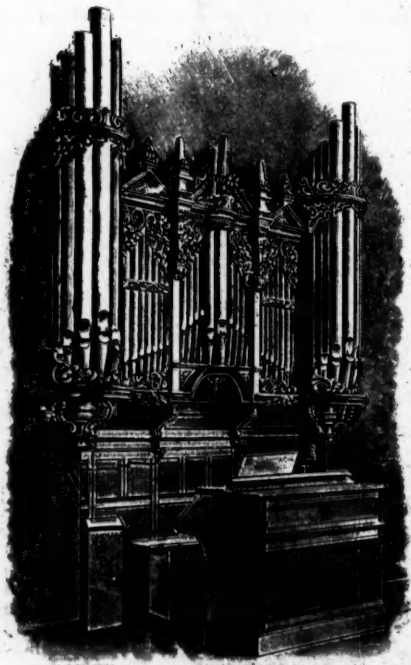
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